

## **Program Review Committee Report Intercollegiate Athletics Spring 2009**

### **Mission**

The mission of the Athletic Department is to “maintain an environment in which the student athlete’s activities are conducted as an integral part of the athlete’s educational experience.”

The mission of the Athletic Department is consistent with the mission of the University. The Athletic Department stated their mission includes public service and providing the community access to athletic events.

### **Statistical Information**

At last review, the Athletic Department had 10 intercollegiate sports; women’s soccer is the most recent addition. The number of student athletes has increased from 188 to 250 since the last program review. For the 2004 and 2009 program reviews, Washburn provided men’s teams in football, basketball, baseball, golf, and tennis. For the same review period, Washburn provided women’s teams in soccer, volleyball, basketball, softball, and tennis.

The Program Review Report contains statistics on the teams’ athletic performance, but it does not contain data on the academic performance of the individual teams: g.p.a., retention, and graduation rates by team.

Washburn University is in compliance with Prong 3 of proportionality compliance of Title IX. The Department, in collaboration with the Equal Opportunity Office, monitors on a bi-annual basis to assure ongoing compliance.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

The Athletic Director (AD) says communication with athletes is a priority. A Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) serves as a vehicle for community service by student athletes and provides opportunities for student athletes to learn leadership skills. The SAAC is not to be used as a conduit for communication with the athletes about problems in the program. The last program review noted communication with student athletes was a weakness; the AD did not report an improvement in the situation.

The department faces significant financial pressures. The increasing cost of gasoline, and thus transportation, is likely to pose a challenge for maintaining the current level of programming. Increases in tuition make greater demands on scholarship funds. The changing demographics of the student body, that is, more female students, might necessitate the need to provide opportunities for female athletes. The program review report acknowledges the financial issues as a weakness but there is no indication of how the department will cope with these issues.

The lack of a full-time assistant coach position in baseball and softball and the inability to offer athletic scholarships in numbers comparable to other MIAA schools is making it difficult for the baseball and softball programs to be competitive. A full-time assistant soccer coach is also needed.

The Athletic Department is in compliance with NCAA requirements. To ensure a smooth transition for new Faculty Athletic Representatives (FAR), these compliance activities should be better documented than they are now. Also, the work load of the FAR should be taken into consideration.

The Athletic Department Director reported significant availability of tutoring for athletes which was not documented in the report.

### **Engagement and Service**

SAAC, coaches and teams engage in a great deal of community service which is not documented in the report.

### **Program Rating**

The Athletic Department is operating at an acceptable level.

### **Recommended Action**

The Athletic Department should continue at the current level of activities and resources. Several recommended actions follow:

1. The Athletic Department should make a stronger case that it is fulfilling its mission.
2. The Athletic Department Mission Statement should be expanded to include a statement about its role in the community and its commitment to community service.
3. The Athletic Department should report some academic statistics by team: grade point average, retention, and graduation rates.
4. The Athletic Department should develop a plan to improve communication with student athletes and other campus constituents.
5. The Athletic Department should document the process and procedures for tracking NCAA compliance.
6. The Athletic Department program review report should provide more documentation regarding services available to student athletes.
7. Service activities by coaches and athletes should be systematically documented.